

## BAYFIELD COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES BOARD MEETING

### EOC & Virtual

September 21, 2022

**DRAFT:**  
**Subject to change at  
the next BCDHS  
meeting**

**Board Members Present:** James Crandall, Jeremy Oswald (virtual), Lona Schmidt (phone), Mary Dougherty, Stephanie Defoe-Haskins (virtual), Patrick Irvine, Marty Milanowski, Madelaine Rekemeyer

**Board Members Not Present:** Sue Rosa

**Others Present:** Elizabeth Skulan, Mary Anich, Tom Croteau, Jeanine Spuhler (virtual), Carrie Linder (virtual), Sarah Traaholt, Stephanie Eder (virtual)

### Call to Order and Introductions

Crandall called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and introductions were made.

### Opportunity for Public Comment (Limit 3 minutes please.)

No Public Comment

### Discussion and Possible Action – Review and approval of the August 11, 2022, meeting minutes

Motion by Milanowski, second by Dougherty to approve the August 11, 2022, meeting minutes as presented. Motion passed.

### Program Presentation – Accessing Public Assistance Programs, Economic Support Services Manager Jeanine Spuhler

- Calling or stopping into Bayfield County Human Services is a great way to access public assistance. Economic Support staff are also knowledgeable about other programs not offered or administered by Bayfield County and often refer citizens to other resources. Residents can find information by checking the Bayfield County website, Forward Health website, Access website, or picking up or requesting printed materials at DHS. Residents are often referred to Human Services by outside agencies.
- “Guide to Applying” publication for Wisconsin’s health, nutrition, childcare and employment programs was presented. The publication instructs applicants on how to complete the application and the information they will need to apply.
- Information can also be found on the access.wi.gov website. It offers a tool that asks a few questions that will help the applicant determine if they may be eligible prior to completing an application.
- The Wisconsin Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) brochure was presented. WHEAP opened for early applications for the 2022/2023 heating year this week. Applications can be completed via the state website at [energybenefit.wi.gov](http://energybenefit.wi.gov), by calling the state call center to apply on demand, by completing a paper application, or by scheduling an appointment with a Bayfield County Economic Support worker.
- Interim Assistance is available for residents with a pending disability determination with Social Security. The benefit is a very small amount meant to cover some of the basic needs of the individual until a disability determination is made. Interim Assistance was once offered by the state. Currently it is only offered as a local program and is funded by county levy and through repayment agreements. Individuals agree to repay the amount issued once they have a positive disability determination and they receive backpay. The local policies are currently being reviewed; recommendations for revisions will be brought to the DHS Board for approval.

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- Irvine was impressed with the wide spectrum of service DHS provides. He was concerned that citizens may not be aware of the services or how to apply.
- Skulan reports dialing 211 in Wisconsin will provide the caller with information and referral resources to social service programs available in their region.
- Dougherty agreed it can be difficult for citizens to locate services. She indicated the “Guide to Applying” is a good tool and she described the experience of an individual who used it. She noted once referred correctly to services, the resident was impressed with the speed and ease of eligibility determination provided by the Northern Income Maintenance Consortium.
- Crandall inquired how benefits are issued. Spuhler explained the way benefits are issued are specific to the program being applied for.

### **Monthly Section Reports**

#### **Support Services – Stephanie Eder**

- Completed budget.
- Meet with Becky Luebke and Karli Pierson from Wisconsin Department of Health Services.
- Working on succession planning and cross training support staff.

#### **Behavioral Health & Community Programs – Tom Croteau**

- The section is now fully staffed.
- August Gordon joined the CCS team as a part-time intern on September 14, 2022, as she begins her graduate program. Gordon previously worked in Family Services Section. Gordon continues to participate in the Family Services on-call rotation.
- Evan Maki and Jamie Allen, Behavioral Health Coordinators, are becoming familiar with the workflow. They are splitting caseloads and providing redundancy for coverage. Maki and Allen also continue to help Family Services with on-call and access. They then round out their hours providing services to CCS participants. DHS staff collaborate between sections whenever possible to provide continuity of care.
- Croteau reported there has been a slight increase in involuntary and voluntary referrals. Some referrals have resulted in higher levels of care for Mental Health and/or Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) services. Information is gathered during and after the initial call or referral. Local providers may be contacted for assessments and/or services. Staff investigate whether the individual has insurance and contacts them to determine coverage. Coordinators then begin looking for placements. Options are analyzed to determine the best fit for the individual and available funding. The budget projections appear to be within budget, but that can change quickly when the treatment is expensive.
- Youth referrals to CCS have increased. The increase is attributed to school starting and Family Services staff who have been making referrals.
- Complicated situations continue to arise. Some are due to the individual having multiple issues, such as mental illness, homelessness, and substance abuse.
- Multiple local behavioral health programs sponsored a community picnic hosted by Voices of Recovery to celebrate recovery month at Prentice Park in Ashland. Over 75 people attended in spite of inclement weather.
- The CCS Coordination Committee has a vacancy for an interested community member. Meetings are held quarterly.
- The board discussed the lack of homeless and warming shelters in Bayfield County.

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**Family Services – Mary Anich**

- Family Services currently has three open vacancies. There is still a lack of qualified applicants.
- Michelle Arganbright joined Family Service staff as a Youth Justice Case Manager on Monday, September 19, 2022.
- August Gordon resigned to attend graduate school full- time. Gordon will continue to participate in the on-call rotation for Family Services. As Croteau reported, Gordon has accepted an internship with the CCS program.
- Anich is conducting more face-to-face visits due to the vacancies.
- Anich planned to attend a two-day Public Child Welfare Conference in Wisconsin Dells but attended remotely due to lack of staff coverage.
- Anich voiced her gratitude to the Ashland County Children and Families supervisor and his lead worker. They have agreed to provide after-hours backup for Anich while she is on vacation.
- Staff perform extra duties due to vacancies. Briana Aldaba, Foster Care Coordinator, is providing Child Protective Services (CPS). Val Westlund, Family Support Specialist, is conducting more supervised visits. Marne Belanger, Social Worker Aide, is working extra hours.
- Anich thanked Croteau because the Behavioral Health case managers in the Behavioral Health and Community Program Section are providing support to the Family Services Section until they are better staffed.

**Aging & Disability (A & D) Services – Carrie Linder**

- Returned recharged from vacation. Linder gave kudos to Aging and Disability staff for their efforts while she was out.
- Kristin Opperman rejoined the team as the second Children's Long-Term Services (CLTS) case manager. Opperman previously worked in CLTS for six years but left for a year to work for the South Shore School District. Due to her previous knowledge and experience, she is already beginning to provide services to children and families.
- Ethan Moore began working as an intern on September 1, 2022. He is working with Hayley Weyers and Kristin Opperman in CLTS to address the backlog of work.
- Linder began to complete performance evaluations. Evaluations are required quarterly for new staff and annually for all staff. Linder reported she has ten staff working in the office staff and seven part-time staff working in the field. She completes evaluations for all of them.
- Opperman and Weyers are coordinating with the Comprehensive Community Services (CSS) staff for children dually enrolled in CLTS and CCS.
- Linder reported she provided orientation and onboarding to new community members on the A & D Advisory committees.
- Linder completed the 85.21 County Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance application for 2023.

**Economic Support Services – Jeanine Spuhler**

- The Random Moment Sampling (RMS) funded position has been filled by Brittany Maxwell. Maxwell started on Monday, September 19, 2022. Economic Support is now fully staffed.
- Early applications for Energy Assistance are now being accepted. Phone calls for Energy Assistance have increased. Support staff mailed out several hundred short-form applications to households on a fixed income.
- Spuhler has contacted local heating and electric vendors about the heating assistance program.
- Economic Support Specialist Aaron Kalmon is being trained to take Energy Assistance applications. He is doing well.

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- The Northern Income Maintenance Consortium's (NIMC) remaining COVID funds are being spent on voluntary overtime and to replace older technology.

### **Monthly Reports**

Monthly Financial and Training reports were reviewed and placed on file.

### **Discussion and Possible Action – Appointments of Frances Renn-Malcheski and Susan Aiken as community members to the Nutrition Advisory Council**

- The Nutrition Advisory Council recommended the appointments of Frances Renn-Malcheski and Susan Aiken to the Committee.

Motion by Patrick, second by Dougherty to approve appointments of Frances Renn-Malcheski and Susan Aiken as community members to the Nutrition Advisory Council. Motion passed.

### **Discussion and Possible Action – Reduction of meals at the Barnes congregate site.**

- Due to low attendance over the past year, the Nutrition Advisory Council has recommended the number of days meals are provided at the Barnes congregate meal site be reduced from five to one beginning in October.
- Linder reported this reduction may allow the resources to either open a new congregate site in Grand View/Drummond/Cable area or add another meal each month to the Iron River congregate meal site.

Motion by Milanowski, second by Dougherty to reduce the number of days meals are served at the Barnes congregate meal site, effective October 3, 2022. Motion passed.

### **Discussion and Possible Action –Increase the costs of meals provided by Bayfield County Food Service**

- Due to a variety of factors Bayfield County has requested a \$.90 increase per meal for the congregate and home delivered meals for the remainder of 2022. Letter written by Captain Luke Kleczka noting reasons for the needed increase was provided.
- Rate will be retroactive to February 1, 2022.

Motion by Milanowski, second by Haskins to increase costs of meals provided by Bayfield County as requested retroactive to February 1, 2022. Motion passed.

### **Progress Report on Aging Plan 2022 - 2024 – Carrie Linder**

- Greater Wisconsin Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. (GWAAR) staff Nick Musson met with Linder and Aging and Disability staff to review progress on goals included in plan.
- Linder reviewed the plan, its goals, and current successes with the board.  
Highlights include:
  - Eight listening sessions to 72 people for power of attorney assistance and follow-up notary sessions.
  - Door to door transportation program has been implemented.
  - Volunteer driver awareness plan is being developed.
  - The electric charging station was installed.
  - Still waiting on the delivery of the Bay Area Rural Transit electric bus.
  - The nutrition goal to expand congregate meal sites has been achieved.

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- Integrating transportation access to allowing seniors without transportation to congregate meal sites is in progress.
- There are currently no pop-up meal sites for communities without meals. Targeted communities include Grand View, Drummond, Cable.
- Isolation and loneliness continue to be an issue for seniors. However, this goal has been moved forward to 2023. The Nutrition Advisory Committee will be asked to develop strategies and an implementation plan at their next meeting.
- Bayfield County reports many volunteer hours in transportation and nutrition programs.
- Red Cliff's Elderly Nutrition Coordinator resigned. Linder reports trying to help with support and outreach.

**Use of Opioid Settlement Funds**— Review summary of all potential uses

- Exhibit E, an overview on how the remainder of the Opioid Settlement funds can be used, was reviewed.
- Funds are limited to addressing opioid issues.
- Tom and Peppy have asked to meet with public health to discuss conducting a community survey to help determine how best to use the funds.

**Summary of Wisconsin County Human Services Association (WCHSA) White Papers- Including Bayfield DHS specific information and recommendations.**

- At the August meeting a request was made to provide information regarding how the WCHSA issues affect Bayfield County.
- Both the original white papers and a summary of the Bayfield County DHS position were provided.
- Skulan reviewed the summary with the Board.
- Bayfield County supports all the recommendations.

**Human Services Board Proposed Meeting Dates 2023**

- Reviewed handout. Board was asked to review dates for any conflict.

**Executive Session**

Pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes §19.85(1)(c); Milanowski made a motion at 5:52 p.m. to go into Executive Session considering employment, promotion, compensation, or performance evaluation data of any public employee over which the governmental body has jurisdiction or exercises responsibility. Rekemeyer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes §19.85(1)(c); Milanowski made a motion at 5:57 p.m. to close the Executive Session and reconvene the meeting in Open Session. Irvine seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Milanowski made a motion to approve the reclassification request from Brynna Watters-Moffitt and recommend her promotion from a Social Worker I to Social Worker II effective January 1, 2023, to the Personnel Committee. Rekemeyer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

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**Other (Informational Items)**

- Thank you to Carrie Linder
- Compliments to Val Westlund

**Future Meetings**

- A. Thursday, October 27, 2022
- B. Combined November/ December Meeting, Tuesday December 6, 2022. Note: The meeting will begin with a holiday potluck.
- C. January 26, 2023

**Discussion and Possible Action:** Motion or Chair's Statement to Adjourn

**Crandall Adjourned the meeting at 6:00 pm.**

Submitted by Sarah Traaholt, Clerk III